Blind persons in the country

362. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the estimates published in the latest issue of the National Medical Journal of India reflect that 18.7 million blind persons in the country would double in about next 20 years;

(b) if so, the other broad features of the said issue of the journal; and

(c) how Government propose to eliminate avoidable blindness amongst Indians?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) The estimates published in the National Medical Journal of India are based on a study conducted in Andhra Pradesh only and therefore cannot be extrapolated to the entire country.

(c) A comprehensive Plan of Action is being prepared by a Working Group constituted by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare under Vision 2020. The Right to Sight Global Initiative aimed at eliminating avoidable blindness in the country. The plan includes controlling blindness due to cataract, glaucoma, diabetes and refractive errors. Special focus will be on prevention and control of blindness in children.

Recognition of courses of Pariyaram and Kochi Co-operative Medical Colleges, Kerala

363. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recognized the courses conducted by the Pariyaram and Kochi Cooperative Medical Colleges in Kerala;

(b) whether applications for recognition of courses have been pending with Government;

(c) whether the Medical Council has taken any step for the recognition of courses; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for non recognition thereof?